

TWENTY YEARS A SILENT COUPLE.

Henry Eskra and His Wife Have Lived as Strangers 'Neath One Roof.

They Quarrelled, Divided the House and Spoke Not to Each Other.

His Side Is Now in Good Repair, While Her's Is Rapidly Falling Into Decay.

CHILDREN TAKE THE MOTHER'S PART.

Only One of Them, the Youngest, Speaks to Both Father and Mother, and His Efforts at Reconciliation All Fail.

For over twenty years Henry Eskra and his wife have lived beneath the same roof at Nanuet, N. Y., without speaking to each other. For nearly a quarter of a century they have shared the same home without being in each other's company for a single moment. This October marks the fifteenth anniversary of their marriage, and but for a strange compact, made more than a score of years ago by, they might now bid their five living children to a memorable family reunion—the celebration of their golden wedding.

That compact, however, will remain unbroken on this earth. The old couple are now in life's twilight. The husband is seventy-three, the wife seventy-five.

She says it was all because his mother lived with them and made trouble. He says it was because she would rifle his pocket and take all of his money. The neighbors say that each was hard-headed and they could not agree. Both declare that the silence between them will never be broken.

Fifty years ago, in the town of Hanover, Germany, they were wed. They were frugal and industrious, and planned bright dreams for the future. They would leave the fatherland and build fortune and make new happiness for themselves. That was their hope, and in twelve years it found a fulfillment.

The couple landed at Castle Garden thirty-eight years ago with their brood of little ones, and took up life's battle again in the new world. At the village of Nanuet they bought the house that they occupy so strangely to-day. The children grew up and married and left the old couple alone—except for the husband's mother. She had come over to live with her son in the new country, and did live with him until her death, seven years ago.

Their Ways Divide.

One day Henry Eskra and his wife quarrelled. That was not new. They had quarrelled before. This time, however, it was a quarrel followed by twenty years of silence. So long ago did it happen that the cause is buried in uncertainty. Old inhabitants of Nanuet merely remember that neither would say much about it at the time, and so their diverging tales told to-day can only be read as they stand apart.

At any rate, when the couple separated they agreed to divide the house. The husband took the west half; the wife the east. It was a perfectly equal division. A partition was built that cut it exactly in two. There are three rooms on his half and three on hers. The house is entered by a common door. This door is sheltered by a very small porch, from which the stone dingy that parks the pathway to the gate is used by both. The well is on his side of the pathway, but the spring is on hers. A little grape arbor stands on each side. There are three apple trees on his side and three on hers. When the division took place both sides were almost identical, but today they present a strikingly different aspect.

The husband makes his living by cutting cross ties and doing any manner of odd jobs that the neighborhood may offer. He has an income, however, and, though it be small, it is enough to support his modest wants and a little over to keep his half of the house in good repair. Only within the past few days he had his side resingled, the chimney supplied with new brick, the veranda supplied with new posts and fresh weather boarding inserted, wherever it was needed. All this has brought about a queer contrast.

The wife's side of the house is quite dilapidated. The bricks that make up the chimney have started cracks between them and some have even fallen out of place. The shingles on the roof are curled with age and covered with moss. Her side of the little porch has almost collapsed through age and neglect, and the entire appearance of her half speaks a story full of pathos.

Live as Strangers.

The husband and wife have each prepared their own meals and eaten them alone and in silence. They see each other daily, but never make a sign of recognition. Each goes about the tasks at hand without getting on the other's side of the house or the pathway that leads to the gate.

And the "children." Only one of them, the youngest, speaks to both. He is a boy of thirty-seven, to bring about a reconciliation between his father and mother, but without success. The other children—two of them married women, the other a married son—do not speak to their father. They take the part of the mother, and they see that she does not want for anything.

When the aged woman was asked the question yesterday, "How do you manage to support yourself?" Mrs. Eskra, who looked up from the Bible that lay in her lap, a Bible printed in German text, and replied:

"Ach! Meine kinder will mich nie forsake."

It was an interesting picture, that of the old woman seated by a window, through which the gloomy light of yesterday cast a shadow over her strong face. Determination was written in every line of it. The big Bible that rested on her lap held no softening verse for that rugged character.

And the husband. He, too, has a strong, marked countenance. When he speaks his mouth twists strangely, and his face is drawn queerly to one side. The neighbors say that this is a result of his efforts, for all of the twenty years and more, to see what his wife was doing on her side of the house. Be that as it may, his face is drawn on the side that it is because of the location of the windows, most constantly turned toward his wife's half of the house. The gossip says that Mrs. Eskra, before they agreed to divorce, had taken as much as \$800 from her husband's pocket and that she gave part of the sum to each child as they married. At any rate, the children all side with her, and in her own words, "will mich nie forsake."

Wagon at Last His Death Bed.

The dead body of Patrick Sheridan, thirty-five years old, was found yesterday in a covered wagon in the rear of No. 215 West Sixty-fourth street. During the summer he had been regularly in the same wagon. He was a less fellow and, although he had an aged mother and father, he failed to provide for them. For years he had been in the neighborhood where he died. On Saturday night, when he went into the wagon, he was somewhat tipsy than usual. His body was sent to the Morgue.

FRANK HAD COAL TO BURN.

Did Not Belong to Him, but He Gave It Away to Square Accounts with the Owner.

Frank Upton, a bright sixteen-year-old boy, a week ago was employed by John Hauschildt, of No. 139 Bank street, to sell coal and coal among tenement houses. Frank lives at No. 735 Washington street. For some reason Hauschildt discharged him. Every boy he met spoke to him about it and he determined to be revenged.

Saturday afternoon Hauschildt's horse and wagon, the latter loaded with sacks of coal, were standing in the street unprotected. The horse knew Frank and when he whistled the animal started down the street after him. He followed the lad on to the sidewalk and knocked ash barrels over. The more damage that was done the more Frank laughed. Then he began to give away the coal in the wagon. The tenants of the neighborhood praised him, and one said if he were only older they would run him for Alderman.

The last sack of coal was being emptied when Hauschildt ran up out of breath. He had missed his horse and wagon. Hauschildt was furious. He could not find the coal, so he could not reclaim it, but he decided to punish the boy.

The crowd would not allow this, and things were becoming interesting when Policeman Kinsman, of the Charles Street Station, appeared and placed the lad under arrest. He was arraigned in Jefferson Market Police Court yesterday, but Hauschildt would not press the charge of disorderly conduct against him. He said he was afraid he would lose all his customers, and that Frank was a pretty good boy, so the Court discharged him.

BAD BOY ROBS A GIRL

Willie Adler, the Terror of a Harlem Neighborhood, Arrested for Taking Ninety Cents.

Twelve-year-old Willie Adler lives at No. 93 East One Hundred and Sixth street. His face is round and full of freckles and he has red hair. He is a tough youngster and all the children in the neighborhood are in mortal dread of him.

Yesterday the boy was arraigned in Harlem Police Court, charged with highway robbery. He took 90 cents from nine-year-old Josephine Benzogum, of No. 24 East One Hundred and Ninth street, on October 7.

The little girl was sent to a grocery store in One Hundred and Sixth street. She had a dollar bill, and the grocer gave her 90 cents change. Willie Adler stopped her a few doors away from the grocery.

"The grocer says he gave you the wrong change," said Willie.

"Oh, no, I have the right change," said the little girl. The boy grabbed the 90 cents and ran.

The little girl hurried home and told her mother. The police of the East One Hundred and Fourth Street Station were notified, and the night went to Young Adler's house. The boy kept away from home until Saturday night, when he was arrested.

In Harlem Police Court yesterday morning Adler admitted taking the money. Magistrate Flammer committed him to the care of Gerry's Society pending trial, and placed him under \$500 bail.

Ten-year-old Isadore Eckhart, who lives at No. 24 East One Hundred and Ninth street, was stopped by young Adler three weeks ago. Isadore was told to throw up his hands, but instead squirmed off and made ready to fight for his rights. Adler changed his mind and went away.

FROM STAGE TO DISHPAN, Ballet Dancer, Not Yet of Age, Taken Home by a Father Who Wants a Housekeeper.

Mary Gallagher, an exceptionally pretty girl, was arraigned at Yorkville Court yesterday on a charge of incorrigibility, preferred by her father, John Gallagher, a stone cutter, of No. 411 West Fifty-third street. The warrant was sworn out last

July, but the girl has been out of the city since then, travelling with a burlesque company in Can. la.

She has been in the city for a week past and has been rehearsing at the Olympia. She says that she has made arrangements to go out on her head with another company this week.

Her father, who had needed her for a housekeeper, told Magistrate Duell that Mary had made many undesirable acquaintances, and had begun to lead a life of which he did not approve.

As she was only thirteen years old Magistrate Duell ordered the girl committed to the House of the Good Shepherd. Then the girl reluctantly agreed to go home.

NO ONE CLAIMS BABY.

Little Boy Blue at Bellevue Still Without a Mother, but Clinging to a Milk Bottle.

Unless somebody claims or adopts that sweet-faced baby in blue that was taken to Bellevue Friday night, it will be transferred to Randall's Island to-day. Little Boy Blue was in close communion with a well-filled nursing bottle at intervals yesterday, and he was so intent upon it that he did not deign to notice visitors. As he lay upon a cot in Ward 131, nestling in pillows, he looked lovable and lugubrious.

But nobody was permitted to hug. For perhaps half of the day he slept.

"Good! Good!" uttered Little Boy Blue, as he clutched the valve of the nursing bottle and closed his round lips upon it. "Ging! Ging!" was the next sound as the milk disappeared.

That was about all he did except to cry, and when he did so it was with all the power of lusty lungs. There is no trace of the mother who left him to the tender mercies of strange hands.

REBECCA FREEM MOBBED.

She Had a Lively Experience with a Rough, Riotous Crowd in Essex Street. Two Arrests Made.

Rebecca Freeman went out yesterday to find violators of the Sunday law in Essex street. She found Rebecca Fager and Mrs. Fager in jail. She also found trouble, and Philip Gordon, a small boy, of No. 29 Essex street, is keeping Mrs. Fager company in jail, because, Rebecca says, he was the instigator of the trouble.

Rebecca finally became convinced that Mrs. Fager, who runs a store for the sale of underwear at No. 29 Essex street, should be arrested. She called a policeman, and had Mrs. Fager taken into custody.

Then ensued a riot. The air was full of stones and barrel staves and fruit that could stand embalming. Rebecca and her adjutant, James Muller, were the marks for all the missiles. From every window came volleys of jeers, punctuated sometimes by a stick of wood or a water picher or a shoe. Rebecca never dodged so many things in her life. Neither did Mr. Muller.

When the policeman with his prisoner and Rebecca and Mr. Muller reached Grand street it looked as though the entire East Side was out chasing the little procession. The yells of the crowd could be plainly heard to the Bowery, and from every direction flocked scores of wild-eyed Hebrews. Rebecca was excited and fell prone on her face.

The crowd was close behind, pushing along. When Rebecca fell she stopped, of course, but the crowd could not stop. Those behind pushed those in front, and in a second Rebecca was under a mound of struggling men and boys. Through the efforts of the policeman she was pulled from under the mass. Cheers and yells greeted her as she appeared, all dishevelled and dirty. Her right hand closely clasped the leg of a small

John Clarkson, of No. 48 East Sixty-sixth street, was arraigned in the Yorkville Police Court yesterday for having scorched at a ten miles an hour rate on Madison avenue hill, at Seventy-third street, on Saturday evening.

"Your Honor," said he, "I know that I was going at nine miles an hour, but I also know that I wasn't going as fast as ten miles an hour. I know that nine miles is a little over the limit, but I was going

down hill. It was for the good of my wheel to coast rather than to back pedal. If Your Honor rides a wheel, you will appreciate my wanting to be careful of mine."

Magistrate Duell does ride a wheel, and he nodded sympathetically. "Is it a fact that the prisoner was coasting?" he asked Policeman McLaughlin, who had made the arrest.

The policeman replied that it was, whereupon the Magistrate surprised everybody by telling Clarkson he was discharged.

"There is no law against coasting," he said, "except an ordinance that applies only to the parks. Coasting, with the feet off the pedals, is not scorching. Scorching is when a man bends himself double and works the pedals like mad. Coasting is distinctly letting the machine run itself. If the prisoner had, while rapidly coasting, run into somebody, he would have been liable to arrest for careless riding or driving, but not as a bicycle scorcher even then."

Put Up Money for Bail.

To Eighty-seventh street the race continued, and there the crestfallen youth was overhauled. He was taken to the West Sixty-eighth Street Station, where he alighted before the sergeant that he had been urged by his employer, who had great confidence in his swiftness, to make the necessary \$20. In court yesterday he admitted to the Magistrate that he had ridden faster than the limit and was fined \$3, which he paid with a satisfied grin.

Frank Nofer, of No. 605 Amsterdam avenue, a slender youth of nineteen, clad in a red bicycle suit, with blue trimmings, explained that he had been lugging on account of a call on a young lady. He had been arrested by Policeman Schuessler on the Boulevard at 11 o'clock on Saturday night.

Magistrate Duell looked kindly at him. "Your haste was in some respects com-

mendable," he said. "But wasn't it pretty late for a call?"

"Oh, but I had called, you know, and was hurrying to get home."

The Judge shook his head. "If it had only been the other way—But as it is I must fine you \$3."

WHEEL CAN'T KILL HORSE.

The "Friend of Man" Not to Be a Museum Freak, Say Delegates to the Horse-shoers' Convention.

According to the master horse-shoers, who are to begin their national convention in the Park Avenue Hotel to-day, the horse has still a chance for public favor. The bicycles have displaced paces and trotters to a great extent, and the trolley cars have thrown thousands of roadsters out of work, but the delegates to the convention say "no!" when asked if horses are soon to be displaced entirely.

These delegates from the Master Horse-shoers' National Protective Association came from every city of any consequence in the country. The chairman of the National Committee of the organization is John P. Purcell, of New York.

"As to the wheel," he said, yesterday, "that does not figure in the matter as much as you might think. In the first place, the majority of the people who ride wheels would not have horses anyway, and for the second place, a number of people who are bicycle riders keep horses, too."

Another delegate who was not so sanguine said: "It will be a long time before horses are only seen in dime museums in this country. The horse will always enjoy a large share of public favor."

The Street will be opened by Mayor President William Waterbury. His speech of welcome, the Mayor will give.

These goods are unexcelled for artistic colorings.

BROADWAY, 18TH AND 19TH STREET

BICYCLE COASTING IS NOT SCORCHING.

Magistrate Duell Holds That There Is No Law Against It.

If a Coaster Runs Into Anybody He May Be Arrested, Otherwise Not.

Wealthy Man Said to Have Backed His Butler to Race Against a Policeman.

POLICEMAN WINS, BUTLER IS FINED.

Other Pleasantries of Bicycle Lawbreaking Involve a Young Man and a Late Evening Call Upon His Sweetheart.

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HOME WHERE A QUEER COUPLE HAVE LIVED TWENTY YEARS IN SILENCE.

Henry Eskra and his wife quarrelled, and since then have never spoken to each other. They continued to occupy the same house in the town of Nanuet, dividing it equally. Just what caused the disagreement no one knows. Their sons and daughters have tried to bring about a reconciliation, but to no avail.

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ASTOR'S ART TREASURES MENAGED BY FLAMES.

Curtain on the Gallery Skylight Ignited by Red Hot Soot from a Chimney.

Smoke and Fire Curled and Darted Through the Ventilator and Frightened the Astors.

Stood Helpless Before the Priceless Paintings Until a Policeman Rushed to the Spot.

QUICKLY FORMED A BUCKET BRIGADE.

Flames Extinguished with Trifling Damage, but Panes of Glass Were Cracked and the Frail Framework Charred.

John Jacob Astor's art treasures in his house, at No. 840 Fifth avenue, were menaced by fire yesterday and they escaped destruction very narrowly. It was 8:40 o'clock when servants in the family of Daniel Worden, at No. 4 East Sixty-fourth street, saw flames curling in thin lines from the skylight of the Astor gallery. The blue curtain that was spread upon the glass was in flames and they were licking into the ventilator that surmounts the roof. Priceless paintings were in peril, and the servants knew it. They hurried to the Astor residence and alarmed the butler.

In a moment the occupants of the palatial house were in commotion, and Mrs. Astor, who is recovering from recent illness, heard the noise, but she did not know that it had been caused by an alarm of fire. She was unaware that the art treasures were in danger. But Mr. Astor's mother, who has just returned home, did, and she, with the Astor servants, tried to find the seat of fire. It was soon found. Spirals of smoke were twisting into the gallery from its roof where they feared the spot and flames were darting in from the ventilator and crawling along the ceiling. Panes of glass in the skylight were cracking from the heat as the blue curtain blazed and the frail framework was igniting.

Frightened and helpless, they stood in a group and contemplated the possible burning of those paintings and feared the consequences to young Mrs. Astor, whose love of art almost amounts to adoration.

While they were hesitating, Policeman William Burger ran into the gallery. "Get water, quick," he cried, and servants hastened to obey the command.

Burger ascended to the roof, and the servants formed a bucket brigade. Fall after fall of water was passed up to him, and he drove them into the flames. They were soon extinguished, but not the work of the ventilator and the blue curtain aim.

"Yes, we were badly minutes," said the butler over within ten minutes. Hardly amounts to any more than \$25. Young Mrs. Astor, who was not at home, was not at home.

Crowds of people and watched the police, the fire, and as he resumed post he was congratulated for his mind.

The fire was caused by red-hot soot from the chimney.

NO BUTTONS; NO JOURNAL.

Cable Employees Say a Recent Order Is a Blow at Their Political Liberties.

"Look at that order. Do you know what that means? Why, it's a notification from the company that Bryan men had better look out or they'll lose their jobs. And we're nearly all Bryan men, too."

The speaker was a gripman in the employ of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, and the notice to which he pointed was attached to the bulletin board in the employees' waiting room in the depot at Fifth street and Seventh avenue. The notice was thus worded:

Metropolitan Street Railway Co. New York, Oct. 9, 1896.

Order to Conductors, Griemen and conductors to be forbidden to wear while on duty, any buttons or badges with inscriptions printed thereon.

F. D. ROXBOROUGH, General